Staff from the Galveston Historical Foundation and National Trust for Historic Preservation will speak about the Partners in the Field Grant as well as lessons learned since Hurricane Ike.

This grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Wilson Trust allows GHF to offer the Windstorm Exemption Program to all of Galveston County. Buildings 50+ years old which retain most of their original character may be eligible for this exemption. This program allows owners to repair and maintain character-defining elements, such as windows, doors, handrails, etc., instead of being forced to meet current code requirements for new construction.

Forms and explanations about the program in English and Spanish may be found at www.galvestonhistory.org. Completed forms will be accepted at the meeting for processing.

Our August meeting at the Dickinson Railroad Museum was a great success with approximately 54 in attendance. Many that joined us for the meeting were first time visitors. Several attendees shared information about their friends and family members that had been employees of the GH&H (Galveston, Houston & Henderson) Rail Line, the topic our speaker presented.

This month’s meeting Thursday, September 24th will be hosted in the historic Butler Building 122 Michigan Avenue and 2nd Street that is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. Come and join us as we enjoy a presentation by the Galveston County Historical Foundation regarding a special windstorm exemption program available in Galveston County. If you know anyone that owns a home or building that is more than 50 years old please invite them to this meeting. More information is included in the newsletter. We really need your help in gathering items for the silent auction that is part of the Living History Dinner.
The dinner is set for October 8th at Butler’s courtyard with a 6:30 pm social and dinner at 7 pm. Please see the additional information on this fun night included elsewhere in the newsletter and get your RSVP in. Gather up a contribution to the auction and bring it to Amber Murphy at Butler’s Courtyard, 281-557-5551 or butlerscourtyard@yahoo.com.

We hope to see everyone at the Oak Tree Festival, Saturday, September 26th & 27th. Jeff Hansen, (281) 486-7226 is in charge of our booth and needs some extra volunteers to man the booth for a few hours.

April 30 Meeting Minutes
Sherry Frankovich

Ronnie Richards called the meeting to order with 47 members and guests present. He told about upcoming events. The Oak Tree Festival is on September 26-27. We will have a booth, where we sell our calendar, oak tree books, and note cards. We need to volunteer to serve. See Jeff.

The Living History Dinner is scheduled for October 8. We will have an actress, who will speak as Susanna Dixon from the Alamo. Invitations have been sent out.

Historic Home Tour is on December 12, which will feature 4 homes, Butler Building, and the West Bay Common School.

Richard Lewis introduced our speaker, Louis Aulbach. He spoke about the Galveston, Houston, and Henderson Railroad, which serviced our area from 1850 to 1967. The League City Station was built in 1896. The Station Master’s House in 1910. The LC Railroad Station was moved to Dickinson in the 1990’s. The LC Station House is now the Parks and Recreation office in League Park.

Business meeting was conducted by Ronnie Richards. Secretarial minutes are printed in the newsletter. Catharin Lewis’ report is also printed in newsletter. She said the 15 year old air conditioner was replaced. September 24 is the next scheduled meeting. Our speaker will discuss Windstorm Insurance.

MusNews
Catharin Lewis, Director / Curator

August was a quiet month at the Museum. We held a few classes at the beginning of the month and then just had walk in visitors drop by throughout the remaining days. Time offered opportunity to catch up on projects, repairs, planning and research. Volunteers and I continued to collect data to verify the cemetery records. The project has been a challenge but an interesting one. There are many people researching their families and the data we organize will make it easier for future visitors looking into their past. We helped a gentleman from Arizona locate his Grandmother at Fairview Cemetery and he shared his research about her history here in League City.

At the end of the month, I closed the Museum for a few days while I tended to my mother. Having family visiting in town, I recruited their help in trimming schoolhouse trees, bushes and cleaning some of the buildings. It was very hot, hard work, but the yard is now ready for fall classes. Registration for the schoolhouse program is coming in for both fall and spring classes. I now just have to find another teacher to help with the program.

We want to thank Bob’s Air Conditioning for installing a new unit for the Schoolhouse after fifteen years. Weather and time made it necessary to make a change or begin having major repair bills.

I want to thank all those who continue to support the work of the Museum either through their time, their money or their friendship in spreading the word. It is a wonderful feeling to know I have the support that I do. I thank you all for this opportunity.

A Special Welcome to Our New Member
Patricia Bryant

This month, the Museum electricity bill was covered by a donation from Dr. Bill and Lori High.

September’s lawn maintenance is being covered by a donation from Ernie Randall.

If you would like to help support the Museum in this tangible way, please feel free to contact Catharin Lewis at 281-554-2994.
Commission members conditionally approved a Certificate of Appropriateness to allow a homeowner to complete repairs to the siding of a portion of a residence at 303 Wisconsin Street, and remove an existing porch and replace it with a smaller sized porch. Dimensional drawings will need to be presented to the Building Department for verification that the porch conforms to the Historic District Guidelines. The applicant will have 180 days (6 months) to complete the project after a permit of approval is issued.

An accessory building at 1010 2nd Street constructed on an existing slab 2-1/2’ from the property line was approved conditionally. Commission waived the 5’ setback requirement. The Building Department will determine if the structure conforms to City Code.

Administrative Approval was granted for a business registration permit for a retail sales and service use at 905 E. Main.

Sign permit request was granted for a ground sign at 713 2nd Street.

Historic District Commission meetings will continue to be scheduled on the third Thursday of the month FY 2010.

Leonard F. Dornak
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Museum Director
Catharin Lewis

2009 Historic Homes Tour

Chairman...Diana Dornak

Pictured L to R - Sharon Brown, Jeff Hansen, Alice Butler, Diana Dornak, Kathie Nenninger, Sherry Frankovich, Joanna Sharp, and Catharin Lewis.

The second meeting of the 2009 Historic Homes Tour Committee was held at Richard and Catharin Lewis’s home this month. Lots of planning and preparation has taken place and the committee is proud to announce the homes/sites to be on the tour this year.

The homes and/or sites to be on the 2009 Historic Homes Tour are:

**The Butler Building** 122 N. Michigan St. -
(Sharon Brown, Site Director)

**The T. J. Dick Home** - 720 Second St. -
(Deborah Gammon, Site Director)

**The Medsger Home** - 1015 Third St. -
(Joanna Sharp, Site Director)

**The Cox-McQuirk Home** - 1518 East Walker St.,
(Kathie Nenninger, Site Director)

**The Giessler Home** - 1004 Third St. -
(Kathy Weisskopf, Site Director)

**West Bay Common School Children’s Museum** -
210 N. Kansas St. -
(Catharin Lewis, Site Director)

"I hope everyone will agree that this line up, which includes the 100 year old Butler Building, will be special and will help us have another successful homes tour," said Diana Dornak, Historic Homes Tour Chairman.

Anyone who would like to volunteer to be a docent for the homes tour please contact the site director for that particular home or call or email Diana Dornak. 281-316-2122 or diana.dornak1@verizon.net.

The next meeting of the Historic Homes Tour Committee will be October 13 - 10am at Diana Dornak’s Home - 1013 Texas Ave.
League City’s Groce Family - Historic Civil War Connection

In the Sunday, August 23, 2009 edition of both the ‘Houston Chronicle’ and the ‘Galveston Daily News’, a very interesting AP article highlighted one of our early League City settlers and family of one of our members, Debbie Groce.

Archaeologists are seeking to detail and preserve remains of Bernardo, a plantation established along the Brazos River in 1822 by Jared Ellison Groce II, one of the Old Three Hundred settlers of Stephen F. Austin’s colony who received land grants from Spain. It is thought that Bernardo is where ‘plantation history began in Texas’.

Debbie Groce has provided the following picture and accounts from the family album of the Groce family who eventually settled in League City.

Leonard Waller Groce, William Wharton Groce’s father, still owned Bernardo when he sold the Liendo. He lived there for awhile but wound up getting the Liendo back. He again sold the Liendo and decided to move to Brazil, but they freed the slaves in Brazil about that time so he moved to Galveston for a change to city life. He went back to Liendo to spend his final years. After Leonard’s death in 1873 the family heirs sold most or all of his properties.

William Wharton Groce was born Sept. 12, 1837 at Bernardo. He was a Captain in Terry’s Texas Rangers and he was in several civil war battles including the Battle of Shiloh. He opened a lucrative cotton compress business in Houston but at the despair of his sister, Sarah Groce Wharton, moved to Eagle Island Plantation and gave up his business. Her son, John Austin Wharton, who was murdered by George Baylor and her husband William Wharton had died and she could not run the plantation alone anymore especially after the Civil War.

William Wharton moved to League City and lived on Galveston Street across from Amegy Bank where the big oak trees are. A nephew has wood posts in the front of his house to indicate where the house once stood.

Willeen Groce was married to Robert Calder for whom the street Calder Rd. is named. Robert Calder was the Great Grandson of Mirabeau B. Lamar. The Butler family lived next door.

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An original hand drawn map by Groce descendant, Sarah Wharton Groce-Berlet. It shows the Groce Plantations along the Brazos River to include Bernardo and the League City connection of Bonnynook. Leonard Courtney Groce who is buried in Fairview was born at Bonnynook.

You can visit the Historic Liendo Plantation during Civil War Days in Hempstead, Texas November 20-22, 2009. Liendo is another Groce Plantation and still stands thanks to General Custer denying that it be burned!
Join us for an evening with Susanna Dickinson
Step back in time…
as we see a woman of courage and how she survived
the Battle of the Alamo in the early days of Texas on
its road to independence.

The League City Historical Society
cordially invites you to enjoy
An Evening with Susanna Dickinson
at
Butler’s Courtyard
122 Michigan Avenue, League City
Thursday, October 8, 2009
6:30 pm Social
Meet Susanna Dickinson - portrayed by
Texana Living History Association Member
LaJuanna Faught
7:30 pm Dinner
Entertainment, Silent Auction,
Raffle & Door Prizes

$50 per person
Mail reservation and checks to: Amber Murphy, Butler’s Courtyard, 122 Michigan, League City, Texas 77573
Call Amber for more information @ 281-557-5551